

Dumas, Delors warn U.S.

RAMATUELLE, France (R) — France warned the United States Monday against trying to rule the world and said the U.N. and Europe should counterbalance the influence of the only superpower left after the collapse of Soviet communism. "American might reign ... without balancing weight," French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas told political associates. "I am telling our American friends: They must realize that being the world's top power creates not only possibilities and rights ... but also duties," he told a meeting of the ruling Socialist Party in this southern resort. Jacques Delors, the French president of the European Community Commission, also told the seminar Washington could not take charge of the whole world. Both Mr. Dumas and Mr. Delors said the United Nations and the European Community should counterbalance American influence. They added that the role of the U.N. should be boosted and east European countries should join EC nations in a European confederation. "If Europe wants to share the world's leadership, it must equip itself to do so," Mr. Delors said.

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Libya-bound cargo seized in Hamburg

BONN (AP) — Investigators seized a shipment of Libya-bound machinery at Hamburg harbour and launched a probe to determine if a German firm was trying to help the Libyans build rockets, officials said Monday. German authorities stressed, however, there were no indications the company was actually guilty of wrongdoing. The raid occurred on July 16. The machinery was to be shipped on a Libya-registered freighter, said Hans-Josef Blumensatt, chief prosecutor in Wiesbaden where the investigation is based. Offices of the Fritz Werner Company, owner of the equipment, were also searched and documents seized, Mr. Blumensatt said. The raids followed a tip by "intelligence sources" that the material could be intended for rocket production, said Volker Franz, spokesman for the federal economics ministry. However, Mr. Franz and Mr. Blumensatt said no evidence has yet been found the equipment was meant for military use. Mr. Franz did not identify the "intelligence sources." During the past few years, U.S. intelligence has tipped off German officials about suspected illegal military deliveries. Mr. Blumensatt identified the seized shipment as an industrial oven and a fiber-wrapping machine. Mr. Franz said authorities later deemed the equipment does not need a federal export permit.

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

Regent meets Masri

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Monday visited the Prime Ministry where he held talks with Prime Minister Taher Masri.

Distribution of food coupons resumed

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Supply Monday resumed distributing food ration coupons to citizens through its 90 centres. The coupons entitle holders to get sugar, rice and milk for subsidized prices during the coming four months. Ministry of Supply sources said the ministry will form committees in government departments, companies, banks, the armed forces and the security departments to distribute the coupons to citizens at their workplace to save them time and effort.

Dutch parliament delegation arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — An eight-member parliamentary delegation from the Netherlands arrived in Amman via Ramtha Monday on a three-day visit to Jordan during which it will hold talks with the speaker of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, the foreign minister and other Jordanian officials. The talks will deal with the situation in the region. The delegation was received in Al Ramtha border post by Al Ramtha Deputy Mohammad Al Dardour, the district governor, and other officials.

Ben Alawi visits Yemen

AMMAN (AP) — Oman's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yousef Ben Alawi flew Monday to Sanaa to resume a process of developing bilateral ties that had been interrupted by the merger of North and South Yemen and the Gulf crisis last year. The official Oman News Agency quoted Mr. Ben Alawi as saying he would hold consultations with the Yemeni officials on various issues and work for bolstering bilateral ties between the Omani and Yemeni nations.

Ilescu in Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — Romania's president Ion Iliescu arrived in Israel Monday, making him the first president from his country to visit the Jewish state. The four-day visit comes at a time when Israel is strengthening ties with European countries. All but Romania severed ties with Israel after the 1967 war.

Maghreb summit on September 15

ABAT (R) — A summit of the Maghreb states will begin in Casablanca on Sept. 15, Morocco's Interior Minister Driss Basri announced. He told a preparatory meeting of local officials in Casablanca that foreign ministers will meet on Sept. 13 and 14. Five members of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) — Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia — were finally due to hold their summit in Libya in June but it was postponed due to political uncertainties after the Gulf war. King Hassan of Morocco took over the AMU chairmanship for a year at the request of Mauritania, which stepped down because of domestic problems.

Shamir accuses Syria of smuggling drugs to Israel

TEL AVIV (R) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir said Monday that Syrian government officials involved in the smuggling of drugs from Lebanon to Israel had lied on all countries that have facts with Damascus to put pressure on the government of President Hafez Al Assad to end drug production in Lebanon. "Drugs smuggling to our country come mainly from Lebanon, where in the Syrian-dominated Aza Valley, drugs are grown, manufactured and distributed," Shamir said in a speech to an anti-drugs organization. "It is not yet that Syrian government agents have been involved in illegal enterprise," he added.

Gorbachev, republic leaders turn table against hardliners

U.S. recognises Baltic independence

The Associated Press

He said it was premature to discuss how much aid might be sent, but he said "we are limited in what we can do." He noted the United States is also committed financially to Eastern Europe — it's also very important that Czechoslovakia and Poland and Hungary succeed."

More than 30 nations have recognised the Baltics since last month's failed coup in the Soviet Union. Mr. Bush said he had spoken to the presidents of the Baltic states and told them independence would be recognised.

The republics that endorse the interim plan agreed between Mr. Gorbachev and the 10 republic leaders Monday would have far more power, with central authorities controlling little more than defense and foreign affairs.

The proposals called for signing a treaty recognising a union of sovereign states with each republic free to define its own form of participation in the union and engage in economic union irrespective of political ties.

Also proposed was granting independence to the five republics that did not initially endorse the proposals — the three Baltic states, Moldavia and Georgia — although that issue has not been fully resolved.

A representative of Latvia also spoke, but said nothing about the proposal; rather, he handed Mr. Gorbachev an appeal asking for the Soviet leader to issue a decree recognising the independence of Latvia.

They also suggested that the republics apply separately to the United Nations to make them subject to international law.

Hardliners at the session had planned an attempt to vote Mr.

(Continued on page 5)

Israel says Baker due in Mideast; Bush reports 'no present plans'

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker will return to the Middle East this month to conclude terms with both Israelis and Arabs for a peace conference, the Israeli foreign ministry said Monday.

Israeli media and diplomatic sources said he was expected in Israel next week after the Jewish new year holiday, which would provide meetings on Monday and Tuesday.

It would be the seventh visit to the region by Mr. Baker, who has been trying since the end of the Gulf war to convince Israel and the Arab states to hold a peace conference tentatively scheduled for October.

"There have been exchanges, communications between us and the Americans and talks the Arab countries to tie the whole thing up," said foreign ministry spokesman Zeev Dover. "There are still some questions that have not been finalised."

"We assume that Mr. Baker will be trying on his forthcoming visit during September before the provisional date in October to cross the ts and dot the is — not only with us, but others to talk to," he said.

However, President George Bush denied the report, saying Monday "there are no plans" to send Mr. Baker back to the Mideast.

Speaking at a news conference called in Kennebunkport, Maine, to announce U.S. recognition of the three Baltic republics, Mr. Bush also said he did not think the turmoil in the Soviet Union had adversely affected Middle East peace prospects. "The ball is in their courts," he said.

The Israeli daily *Yedioth Achronot* said Mr. Baker was expected to arrive in Israel this weekend, while Israel Radio said he would begin his latest shuttle among Arab capitals on Sept. 12.

Bush: Mideast peace initiative unaffected

KENNEBUNKPORT, Maine (R) — President George Bush said Monday that efforts to arrange Middle East peace talks were unhampered by the turmoil in the Soviet Union, but suggested that the timetable for a peace conference was uncertain.

At their Moscow summit in July, Mr. Bush and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev agreed to work for direct negotiations between Israel and the Arabs starting in October.

"I can't give you the prospect of that. I don't think it's been affected by anything in the Soviet Union, however — the ball lies in other courts," the president said when asked if the peace conference was still on track.

Mr. Bush was apparently referring to a residual sticking point in convening a peace conference —

finding a formula for Palestinian representation acceptable to all the parties.

He told a news conference that U.S. diplomatic efforts to resolve the problem continued "and I would hope we would be able to go forward with the peace conference that the whole world wants to take place."

Before last month's abortive power grab by Kremlin hardliners triggered an anti-communist Soviet revolution, there was speculation that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker would return to the Middle East in September to try to nail down a peace conference.

Mr. Bush said there were no plans for a sixth Baker peace mission at present, but that he would return to the region at some point.

(Continued on page 5)



EXPECTING ATTACK: Serbian villagers with a machine gun take position in Bijelo Brdo to counter an expected attack by Croatian forces

Spasodic mortar attacks in various parts of Croatia were reported overnight but the major firefights appeared calm. Zagreb Radio said a policeman was killed in the eastern Croatian village of Lazkovo and houses were set on fire in Gospic near the Adriatic coast (see page 8).

UNRWA chief arrives to assess possible help

AMMAN (J.T.) — The head of the United Nations agency overseeing aid to Palestinian refugees arrived in Jordan Monday to consider how to help the Kingdom cope with a flood of expatriates forced from Kuwait and other Gulf countries.

In a statement to Jordan Television at the airport, Mr. Turkman said: "We know that Jordan is under a very heavy burden because of these arrivals and migrations. We, as UNRWA, will do our best to help those who need UNRWA's assistance."

Mr. Gorbachev took forceful control of the afternoon session.

"I am not going to listen to any demonstrations or demonstrative

(Continued on page 5)

Kouchner: Garang still in charge

NAIROBI (Agencies) — France's minister for humanitarian affairs says John Garang is still in control of Sudanese rebels contrary to recent claims he was ousted, a newspaper reported Monday.

Bernard Kouchner said he met Colonel Garang in Kapoeta, a regional base for the southern Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in southeastern Sudan near its border with Kenya over the weekend.

"He looked very well and very much in control," the daily *Naivasha* quoted Mr. Kouchner as saying. "He was surrounded by his nine commanders and nothing has happened to him."

Mr. Kouchner left Kenya Sunday evening and it was not possible to get further comment on his meeting with Col. Garang. The official, who the AP said agreed to discuss the trip only if not quoted by name, said that the radio report "stands to reason," but that Israel had "no firm knowledge about an imminent date."

Mr. Baker will try to work out a compromise between the two sides on the Palestinian issue, the radio said.

Differences over terms for addressing peace talks and the abortive coup in Moscow have raised doubts over timing of the conference, but Mr. Dover told Reuters Israel has not been told of any change in the original October date.

The Palestinians are the only major participant in the proposed talks yet to accept the U.S. plan, stalled by internal debate over whether to accept advance concessions demanded by Israel.

Israel has conditionally accepted Mr. Baker's proposal but has demanded the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Palestinians from Arab East Jerusalem be barred from any role in the talks.

Palestinians reject these demands.

Mr. Baker would have to bridge that gap, reassuring an Israeli government that fear peace talks could force it to withdraw from occupied Arab territories such as East Jerusalem while persuading Palestinians it is in their interest to accept tough Israeli terms for attending.

Israelis want Mr. Baker to pro-

Jerusalem Palestinians warned against selling land to Jews

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Palestinians leading the 44-month-old uprising against Israeli rule Monday warned Arabs against selling property in East Jerusalem to Jews.

In a leaflet to Palestinians in the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank, including Arab East Jerusalem, the United Leadership of the Uprising declared:

"Any one who is found guilty of selling property in Jerusalem to Jews must be put to death."

Palestinians say the Israeli occupation authorities are helping Jewish religious students take over buildings that become vacant in the city's Muslim quarter.

Israeli Housing Minister Aricl Sharon last week announced plans to tighten Jewish control over East Jerusalem by a ring of new settlements.

The leaflet said: "This organized campaign has reached a

dangerous situation and put the future of Jerusalem in the balance."

It called for a week of demonstrations, prayers at Christian and Muslim holy places in the city Sunday and Friday and mass visits to Jerusalem by Palestinians.

Israel claims East Jerusalem "annexed" after its seizure in the 1967 war, is part of the Jewish state's capital and demands it be excluded from future peace negotiations.

Palestinians regard East Jerusalem, home for 150,000 Arabs, as their future capital.

The Arab-Jewish struggle over East Jerusalem was heightened when Israel gave conditional support to U.S.-proposed Middle East peace talks in October.

Leaders of the uprising, which began in December 1987, urged Arabs living elsewhere to return to their homes in the city and

to their homes in the city and

called for renovating run-down buildings to prevent them being taken over.

They said Israelis had been seizing houses inside and outside the walled Old City, buying property and setting up belts of settlements around it.

Police acting on a military order have shut down a Palestinian press service in Jerusalem for one year.

Documents and cash were also confiscated from the Al Quds Press Office, said a police spokesman.

The office publishes a daily newsletter called Al Masira (the march).

Police said the office is used by the daily Al Quds, a prominent Arab East Jerusalem newspaper, but added that the newspaper is not affected by the closure. That newspaper's owner, Mahmood Abu Zait, said they had no connection with the closed press office.

In an interview, Mr. Zaitouni declined to talk about his meetings, but said: "I was optimistic two months ago before the first Westerner was released and I said they would be released and everyone raised their eyebrows."

Mr. Zaitouni added: "I say the process will continue, but I am not talking about the Israelis at this stage. My forecast is that it will not take long, according to what I gather from what I hear."

The spiritual leader of Hizbullah has urged Germany to release two Palestinians it is holding as part of an overall prisoner exchange.

Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadilah told the weekly news magazine *Der Spiegel* in an interview published Monday he believed Bonn would find a compromise allowing it to release the Hamadi brothers, jailed on terrorism charges.

Amnon Zichroni spoke on his return from Austria and Switzer-

Hamas offers to include missing Israeli in hostage-prisoner swap

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Palestinian fundamentalists in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip offered Monday to include a kidnapped Israeli soldier in an exchange for Western hostages held in Lebanon.

In a statement issued in Beirut, a spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) said the group was holding Israeli soldier Ilan Saadon.

Mr. Saadon was kidnapped with another Israeli soldier by Hamas fighters in southern Israel May 3, 1989. The body of the other serviceman was found and the Israeli army assumes Mr. Saadon also died. His remains have not been found.

"It (Hamas) has started holding contacts with all forces and groups holding hostages and Israeli captives to take part in an exchange of captives," the statement added.

"Hamas will continue its efforts with all parties concerned to unify efforts and positions to finish this operation successfully," it said.

Hamas is a rival of the Palestine Liberation Organisation

Gaza — a big prison with unbroken prisoners

By Ghader Taha
Special to the Jordan Times

RAFAH — A rumbling noise breaks the menacing silence over this squall shantytown. Army jeeps head towards Samira Al Jabari's asbestos roofed shack. Then there is a thunderous explosion.

Israeli soldiers shout incomprehensible orders in Hebrew and broken Arabic and children scream. Ms. Jabari's neighbours could not leave their homes to help the family because of a daily curfew in Gaza between 9:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m.

The sound of crumbling walls faded and 60-year-old Um Adel started ululating and singing as if it was a wedding. She clapped her hands to anger the soldiers.

She now lives with her three sons, their wives and her grandchildren in a tent next to the ruins of her demolished home. But the Israeli soldiers told her she had to remove the tent because the land will also be confiscated as punishment for her son's "crimes."

"I am in black within myself, but I always wear red for my enemy," Um Adel said quoting an often repeated Palestinian proverb. "They will not break me or my family ... we will manage," she said forcefully.

Her home was blown up because her eldest son Adel has been accused of being a member of the "Black Panthers," a Palestinian group which is accused by the Israelis of killing "collaborators."

According to a Western aid worker, at least 13 homes were demolished or sealed in Gaza between March and June this year, leaving over 150 people homeless.

Um Adel's fortitude is a common phenomenon in Gaza's eight crowded refugee camps, but 24 years of occupation, neglect and internal socio-economic pressure have also left many Gazans desperate and hopeless.

"Life is so difficult here," said Tahani Al Ali, a young woman. "We have no peace, constant harassment, humiliation and the world has forgotten us."

Day in and out, Gaza's reality grinds everyone down. For most mothers it is a struggle to cope with hardships imposed

by the intifada and to sustain resistance to the occupation forces. They also have to cope with an uprising that for the time being has turned on itself with Palestinians killing Palestinians.

Women in downtown Gaza City wait in the unbearable heat near the barbed wire of the central Gaza prison and headquarters for Israel's domestic intelligence organisation — the Shin Bet — to see their sons. The prison, located in the heart of the city, is the main education centre in Gaza City.

International relief workers said there are over 4,000 Gazans in Israeli jails on intifada-related charges.

Children, dirty and unruly, play games in the maze of open sewers always with wooden or plastic guns as they act out. martyrdom.

Gaza men stay close to their homes. Those with no prison records and relatives without records, may work in Israel, but the number had drastically declined.

Thousands leave at dawn for poorly paid jobs in construction, unskilled agriculture work and the most menial municipal services, returning before the curfew to Gaza, their grand prison.

Since the beginning of the Gulf crisis, thousands of Palestinians have been issued green identity cards, barring them from leaving the Gaza Strip or travelling to Israel thus further tightening the noose. The card has become a prison without bars for many Palestinians.

Cardholders, both in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, complain of harassment and beatings by police and automatic arrest if they are picked up during routine identity checks near a scene of unrest.

Before the intifada, 80,000 Gazans worked in Israel, 55,000 during the intifada and now only 25,000 make the daily trek to Erez checkpoint, Gaza's border with Israel.

Since 1989, a total of 388 Palestinians have been killed for allegedly spying for Israel's security services in the occupied territories. Suspected collaborators are forewarned with beatings and tough interrogation sessions.

Many Palestinian leaders concede that many of the dead

reduced to a trickle and funds from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) are less than one third the pre-Gulf war level.

According to PLO sources, the organisation used to channel almost \$300 million in assistance to the West Bank and Gaza before the Gulf crisis. Now the PLO sends about \$50 million annually. The figures could not be verified.

Alongside the intense pressure from the occupation forces and a moribund economy, some Gazan groups, including Hamas, have imposed Islamic codes on the inhabitants and banned any type of entertainment. Theatres, cultural centres and the only public garden are now closed to the public.

Women are forbidden from walking in the street without covering their hair. The retribution from the self-appointed guardians of the faith can be severe, including stabbing and stoning.

"I never used to wear a veil before the intifada and now I am forced to," said a young college-educated woman. "I am scared of the fundamentalists." She refused to give her name.

Women branded as "loose," gamblers and alcoholics do not survive in Gaza. They are considered security risks, on the grounds they can be used as informants to trap activists.

Some justify the enforced adherence to Islam and ban on entertainment by saying that all of Gaza is in mourning because every family has a story to tell of a son or relative who had either been killed, wounded or arrested.

Opponents say that Hamas is using pressure tactics to show it controls the Gaza Strip but in fact it does not and people only comply to their orders out of fear.

The tension in Gaza has turned inward as the Israeli army deliberately reduced its presence relying on local informers.

"Gaza's economy is in tatters," said U.N. officer Issa Qarra. "We have a 40 per cent unemployment rate and they continue to tighten the screws."

After the Gulf war, remittances from relatives in Kuwait and the Gulf have been almost



A Palestinian shopkeeper sits outside his shop in the Gaza Strip while an Israeli soldier keeps watch on the street

were not collaborators. But they say the killings have declined in the last few months.

Some have given up the struggle and have escaped Gaza's misery. Gazans recount stories of women and men who have committed suicide or have tried to "accidentally" burn themselves with paraffin oil.

According to a health official suicide rates among men and women have more than tripled since the start of the intifada.

Over 750,000 Palestinians

Kuwaitis clamour for U.S. bases

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwaitis are clamouring for U.S. troops and bases in the emirate but diplomats say this is ruled out under a protection agreement being negotiated with Washington.

"We are still afraid even to open our water taps, because we think Saddam and not water would trickle out," said an editorial in Monday's Al Qabas newspaper reflecting growing Kuwaiti fears.

A recent poll in the English-language Arab Times daily said 93 per cent of Kuwaitis wanted U.S. bases in the emirate and they did not trust fellow Arabs to protect them.

Last month, Kuwait and its Arab Gulf allies shelved plans to create a joint security force.

The United States has made it clear it will not keep bases in Kuwait, but will maintain a naval presence in the Gulf.

One Western diplomat in Kuwait said recent reports in local papers of an imminent pact with Washington involving U.S. bases in the emirate were aimed at domestic consumption, "because of a state of hysteria among the Kuwaitis that Saddam will attack."

Western diplomats said secur-

ity arrangements between Kuwait and the United States would cover the use of Kuwaiti facilities, logistical support, joint exercises and training. The Americans would also keep military equipment in the emirate.

They said Washington would repair Kuwait's two airbases, Ahmad Al Jaber and Ali Al Salem, damaged in the Gulf war.

"But there will not be any permanent bases as the Kuwaitis want and no permanent presence. The Kuwaitis should feel safe enough with the arrangements and with a continued naval presence," one diplomat said.

Kuwait's Defence Minister Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah was quoted Saturday as saying the emirate was about to sign an agreement guaranteeing U.S. protection.

He said he would visit Washington soon to sign a pact under which the United States would store weapons and carry out joint exercises in Kuwait.

Sheikh Ali said the pact covered military cooperation to keep regional peace, protection of "the two countries," the storage of weapons and equipment, and joint land, sea and air man-

oeuvres in Kuwait.

He said Kuwait needed external protection but he did not support the idea of foreign bases "because Kuwait is small and the presence of bases in it makes it threatened all the time because of its proximity to the enemy."

Fears of the Iraqi threat were heightened on Wednesday when Kuwait said it had thwarted an incursion by armed Iraqi onto the strategic island of Sabkha.

The United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) is investigating the Kuwaiti reports, which Iraq denied.

"The Kuwaitis are trying to use any such Iraqi action to point out their vulnerability and the fact that Saddam is still after them. It will take them some time to realise that Saddam is in no position to attack them any more," one diplomat said.

On Tuesday Washington announced it would keep 1,500 ground troops in the emirate for several months longer than scheduled.

The first of the 1,500 troops started arriving Sunday to replace the 3,700 soldiers already in the emirate, who will finish their withdrawal by mid-September.

Shin Bet agents get six months in jail for murder

TEL AVIV (AP) — The Israeli supreme court rejected an appeal by two agents of Israel's Shin Bet security service and sent them to six months behind bars for beating an Arab prisoner to death in a Gaza Strip jail, a justice ministry official said Monday.

The two Shin Bet interrogators

were appealing a court decision which convicted them of negligence in the death of a 27-year-old Palestinian.

The two agents had requested to serve their sentences doing community service arguing that their identities would be revealed, endangering their lives if they went to jail.

"Only by serving time in jail, and not by community service... can we deter others from going in the same directions," supreme court justice Aharon Barak wrote.

Mr. Barak added that the trial was aware of the pressures facing the Shin Bet.

But he said the agents "acted illegally. They violated the human rights of the suspect, caused the death of a man, harmed the image of the general security of Israel interrogators.

In a plea bargain, the two agents, whose names were not released, pleaded guilty to charges of causing death by negligence, which carries a maximum sentence of three years.

"I think this sentence sounds like Shin Bet guys have killed an animal and not a human being," said Sheikh Ali's father, Kamel, upon hearing the sentence. "Is this a democracy we have been hearing from the Justice?"

His voice cracking over the telephone, the older Sheikh Ali said he was worried Nasser, another son currently serving a three-year sentence for uprising activities, would meet the same fate as his brother at the hands of Israeli interrogators.

Soviet supplies to Afghans dry up

KABUL (R) — Vital Soviet food and fuel supplies to Afghanistan appear to have virtually dried up since the political convulsions in the Soviet Union, causing Kabul prices to soar along with fears about the coming winter.

Amid the rapid Soviet changes it was unclear whether the cuts were due to a policy decision in Moscow or confusion at the heart of the Soviet system, business men and diplomats in the Afghan capital said at the weekend.

Huge Soviet SU-76 transport planes still land at Kabul airport but their cargoes are mostly destined for the Afghan army, which is fighting Mujahedeen guerrillas.

Little appears to be coming down the Salang Highway from the Soviet border — the main route across the high Hindu Kush Mountains for wheat and fuel convoys.

Over the years the Soviet-backed government has come to expect a steady, seemingly inexhaustible flow of supplies from its northern neighbour, one Asian diplomat said.

That appears to have stopped for the moment, fulfilling President Najibullah's worst nightmare, he said.

With Moscow's help, the gov-

ernment has survived repeated guerilla efforts to halt supplies reaching Kabul since the last Soviet troops left in 1989 after a nine-year occupation.

However, the Afghan president has seen some of his closest allies in Moscow purged in the past 10 days for their part in the attempted overthrow of President Mikhail Gorbachev, and the rise of Russian President Boris Yeltsin who makes no secret of his wish for change in Kabul.

Petrol and diesel shortages in Kabul are beginning to bite. Black market prices of both have nearly doubled in recent weeks and transport operators say they are cutting services.

Five litres of petrol now cost about 3,500 afghanis (\$3.5), nearly twice the daily wage of a Kabul labourer.

Last week President Najibullah said he was confident Moscow would stick to its commitments to Kabul.

However, the country had acquired only one-third of the wheat needed to survive the harsh Afghan winter until next March, Food Minister Anwar Dost said.

Devastating spring floods in the south have hampered normal summer stockpiling.

Businessmen said the government was hoping the private sector could fill the gap by trucking in supplies from Iran and Pakistan — nations that play host to guerrilla groups trying to topple Mr. Najibullah.

Private deals must be made in hard currency, however, and after years of war Kabul's semi-official money market is short of dollars.

"We want cast-iron assurances that the government will not force us to sell any wheat or fuel we manage to acquire from either Iran or the Soviet Union to the armed forces at cut rate prices," one businessman said.

Government workers in Kabul receive essentials through a coupon system — when these are available. Ordinary residents rely on private bazaars where they can find expensive grain, sugar and cooking oil smuggled across the mountainous border from Pakistan.

With most people reliant on diesel fuel for heating and cooking in the coming months and with food prices rising, Afghans were preparing for a hard winter.



Muammar Qaddafi

feet.

"We support your action with all our might..."

The Libyan leader said the defeat of the coup in Moscow proved that his theory about the indestructible powers of the masses was right — a theory popularised in his Green Book, a politico-socio work.

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With Moscow's help, the gov-

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

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DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

(Terminal 1)

7:00 AM Tripoli (RJ)

7:30 AM Cairo (MS)

7:45 AM Moscow (SV)

7:50 AM Khartoum (SU)

8:15 AM Larnaca (CY)

8:30 AM Amsterdam (KL)

8:45 AM Beirut (ME)

8:45 AM Bucharest (RO)

Upper/lower price in \$s per kg.

Apple 650/550

Banana 700/600

Banana (Musketeer) 500/450

Orange 450/400

Cabbage 250/200

Carrot 200/150

Cucumber (large) 200/150

Cucumber (small) 200/150

Eggplant 240/180

Garlic 900/800

Grapes 700/600

Grapefruit 280/220

Lemon (green) 280/220

Lemon (yellow) 300/

CBJ defers taking decision on sale of BCCI branches

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Monday deferred taking any decision on allowing the sale of the branches of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) pending further legal procedures.

A CBJ announcement, issued at the end of a board meeting called to discuss the issue, said that the postponement was decided to allow for the finalisation of all legal procedures which would allow the central bank to take the appropriate decision with regard to the BCCI branches.

The CBJ has received several bids from Jordanian financial institutions to purchase the BCCI branches. These are the Jordan Arab Banking Corporation, the Union Bank and the Business Bank.

Last month, the CBJ expressed hope that a final decision on

selling the BCCI branches would be taken in the first week of September and invited interested institutions to submit their offers for the transaction.

A decision was taken last month allowing interested banks to study the auditors' report about the BCCI before deciding to buy.

The CBJ's desire to sell the three branches of the BCCI in Jordan came in a reaffirmation of the government's decision not to order the liquidation of the BCCI operations in Jordan but to sell the branches to interested banks.

The BCCI, founded in Pakistan in 1972 and with operations in more than 70 countries, was alleged to have been tied to drug barons, terrorists, arms dealers and intelligence agencies and to have robbed depositors of billions of dollars.



MATHEMATICS CONFERENCE OPENS: The first Jordanian Mathematics Conference opened at the University of Jordan Monday and the participants are set to review 34 research papers. The opening session of the three-day conference was addressed by Dr. Mohammad Hamdan, (centre) who deputised for His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan. Dr. Mohammad Al Magid, the university vice-president, also addressed the opening session underlining the important topics for discussion and calling for interaction among the participants to find practicable resolutions. According to Dr. Queen Zoubi, who chaired a committee that prepared for the conference, the participants will discuss the establishment of a Jordanian mathematics society in addition to reviewing the research papers. Dr. Zoubi said that the University of Jordan had prepared for the conference in cooperation with the other three government universities in Jordan: Mutah University, Yarmouk University and the Jordan University for Science and Technology.

Ministry of Education adopts decisions on tawjih exams

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Education Monday adopted a number of decisions related to the tawjih examinations for the current 1991-92 scholastic year allowing more time for the students during the examinations sessions and adjusting the level of marks for a number of subjects.

A statement said that the education committee at the ministry, chaired by Minister of Education Eid Dabiqat, had decided that more time would be allowed for the English and Arab subjects in the literary stream, for the English and Physics subjects in the scientific stream and for Arabic in the agricultural, industrial, hotel management and nursing streams.

Furthermore, the committee has decided that the lowest accepted mark in English, in the literary stream, be further lowered and the lowest mark in Arab history be raised a little. But no figures were given by the committee.

The committee said that the decision was taken following due consideration of the results of the tawjih examination in the past scholastic year and in light of reports submitted by various concerned bodies about that examination.

The committee has decided that examination committees would have to give due consideration to these amendments when setting tawjih examinations from now on.

The final results of the tawjih examinations for the past year, announced by Dr. Dabiqat on July 19, showed that 51.9 per cent of a total number of 62,861 students passed the examinations.

Complaints were made in the papers and on Jordan television about the difficult sets of questions and the insufficient time allowed for a number of the subjects given to the students.

Iraqi official appeals to world community to lift embargo

AMMAN (Petra) — Iraq is currently passing through a very critical stage unprecedented in history, and its people are exposed to untold sufferings and starvation coupled with numerous diseases, according to Speaker of the Iraqi National Assembly Saadi Mahdi Saleh.

The Iraqi people are facing continued aggression and the embargo since Iraq has implemented all U.N. Security Council resolutions related to the Gulf crisis.

He said that the council has no more justification for maintaining the embargo on Iraq, whose children and elderly are the main victims.

Mr. Saleh appealed to the world community to lift the embargo since Iraq has implemented all U.N. Security Council resolutions related to the Gulf crisis.

He said that the council has no more justification for maintaining the embargo on Iraq, whose children and elderly are the main victims.

In the other murder case, a 15-year-old girl identified only as L.A.F.A., also from Zarqa City, was found murdered. The murderer is her own brother who told the police that he killed his sister because of her bad conduct.

According to the prosecutor general, the parents of the dead child had reported his disappearance 48 hours after searching for him in vain.

He said the murderer must

Amman Financial Market to implement new stock trading regulations

By Ziyad Al Shilleh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Amman Financial Market (AFM) will

next week implement new regulations related to dealings with shareholding companies in terms of their operations, profits and the number of shares traded in the market, according to an announcement by Ibrahim Bilebi, the market's director general.

As of the coming week, the AFM will announce the suspension of trading in shares by companies found to be violating regulations and will also declare the financial position of various companies and their activities as well as their classification to help investors make decisions on their trading in shares, Mr. Bilebi said.

But perhaps the most important information required by the investors which the AFM will declare is that which throws light on the companies' capital, profits, rights of shareholders and companies credit-

Deadline extended for offer of exemption from draft

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanian expatriates working in Kuwait have six more months to pay the sum of \$6,000 if they do not wish to do military service in the Kingdom, while those living elsewhere have only three months to do so, according to a government decision.

At the time, reports from the West Bank said that the Israeli authorities had opened the exemption halls and allowed irresponsible elements to sabotage the examination process.

Expatriates not living in Kuwait and delaying payment beyond the three-month period will have to pay a fine of \$500 for every extra month for another period of three months, ending by Feb. 29, 1992, according to a statement by the Council of Ministers.

The decision was an extension to the original government announcement allowing Jordanians to make payment in lieu of doing military service. The last deadline ended on Aug. 31.

So far, the Treasury is believed to have collected nearly JD45 million in foreign currency from expatriates and their sons through the exemption of military service arrangement which went into force in Aug. 1990.

Normal exemption from the two-year military service is granted to the chronically ill and the only son in the family.

According to the government order, unless the \$6,000 fee is paid, every male, regardless of the period of absence from the country, has to serve the term before reaching the age of 37.

"If the embargo continues, the Iraqi people will face tragedies of major consequences, with the expected death of hundreds of innocent civilians," said Mr. Saleh in the message, copies of which were sent to speakers of world parliaments.

Mr. Saleh appealed to the world community to lift the embargo since Iraq has implemented all U.N. Security Council resolutions related to the Gulf crisis.

He said that the council has no more justification for maintaining the embargo on Iraq, whose children and elderly are the main victims.

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WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

★ Art exhibition by Ibrahim Abu Rabb at the Royal Cultural Centre.
★ Exhibition of ceramics by Iraqi artist Salim Jamali Al Nouri at Alia Art Gallery.

CONCERT

★ Concert by Al Jeed Al Jadid folk troupe at the Royal Cultural Centre — 8:30 p.m.



ALL SMILES, newly-wed Jordan Times friend and former staff member Saad Hattar with his wife Safa Mazzahreh pose for the camera at the church where the two tied the knot last Friday in the presence of family and friends. The happy couple are now enjoying their honeymoon on the sunny beaches of Rhodes Island in the Mediterranean. Saad, who is now a reporter for the Agence France Presse in Amman, and Safa, who is an agricultural engineer, will be reporting back to work on Sept. 10. Just before his departure, Saad told the Jordan Times that it was the best wedding he had ever had. We at the Jordan Times share his view and wish him and his wife a very happy life and hope that it will be his best and last wedding.

Housing shortage for students in Irbid frustrates administration

By Nidal M. Ibrahim
and Aida Tawil
Special to the Jordan Times

IRBID — The massive influx

of returning expatriates from

the Gulf states and the expan-

sion of classes at Yarmouk

University has deprived stu-

dents there and at the Jordan

University for Science and

Technology (JUST) of accom-

modations, leaving many to

wonder how they will attend

school in the new academic

year due to begin Sept. 16.

The two buildings normally

used to house the students

are being transformed into

classrooms for new courses

that are being introduced at

Yarmouk University, said Dr.

Eidet Mutlaq, director of stu-

dent services. The two build-

ings, along with other housing

in the past were used to

accommodate about 2,000 stu-

dents from the two universi-

ties, she said.

"Many specialisations have

been introduced and there are

no buildings to house new

schools," Dr. Mutlaq said.

The use of the buildings to

house some classrooms will

leave between 200 to 300

female students from the JUST

without accommodations, said

Dr. Kamel Ajlouni, presi-

dent of JUST. The female stu-

dents, most of whom live outside

the university, will be housed

in nearby dormitories.

Students will be placed in

buildings in the area where

the university is renting apart-

ments at a cost of JD 25 to JD

30. "It's very cheap," Dr. Mu-

taq said. "It's minimal. This

figure includes ... a furnished

room, water, electricity, beat-

ing, cleaning and supervision."

But while Yarmouk Uni-

versity seems to have solved its

housing problems, the conver-

sion of the two buildings has

seriously hampered JUST's

ability to help its boarding stu-

dents.

An angry Ajlouni repeatedly

said he had tried to find a

solution to the problem and

railed against the local press

for continually covering the

issue without offering solu-

tions.

"I don't know (what to do),"

he said. "If you can find houses

in Amman or Irbid I will house

them.

"You try to help your stu-

dents but you can't find

housing in Irbid," he said.

Dr. Ajlouni said his options

were limited because of a tight

budget, soaring rental costs as

a result of increased demand

and competition from returnees

for available housing.

"Talk to the prime minister,"

Dr. Ajlouni told a reporter,

again making the point that his options were limited.

"It is the government which

allocates the money, not the

university," he said.

Dr. Ajlouni said he under-

stood that the government also

was limited in its options.

"How can I ask the govern-

ment to give me money when

they don't have the money?"

he asked.

"What is important? A stu-

dent living in a room or a

whole family living in that

same room?" he asked

Israel says Baker due in Mideast

(Continued from Page 1)

wide assurances of U.S. support on key issues in advance of attending a peace conference. Palestinians want him to reaffirm a U.S. commitment to a settlement based on trading land for peace, which Israel opposed.

Mr. Baker, who has secured a Soviet role as co-sponsor of the peace talks, is unlikely to receive conclusive answers from either the Israelis or Palestinians during his next visit.

The Israelis will not commit themselves to attending until they know the nature of Palestinian participation, demanding a major role in determining who speaks for them.

The Palestinians will consult with the PLO in Tunis after meeting Mr. Baker and a final position will have to be approved by the Palestine National Council, a gathering of Palestinian leaders expected to be held in September in Algiers.

A senior PLO official said any delay in holding a Middle East peace conference would "seriously prejudice" efforts at achieving peace in the region.

Arab countries would be "the main losers" of any delay, which "would affect the credibility of Washington and bring the region to a situation comparable to that after June 1967," Mr. Mohammad Milhem said in an interview with Tunisian radio.

Israel would be the main beneficiary of a delay in the conference, said Mr. Milhem, head of

the PLO's Occupied Territories Department, in an interview from Amman.

Israel would take advantage of a postponement of the conference to increase its settlements in the occupied territories to create "a new state of affairs rendering the Palestinian people's objectives impossible," Mr. Milhem said.

But he said that "what happened in the Soviet Union should be a catalyst for setting a date for the peace conference." He did not explain what he meant.

The underground leaders of the uprising called Monday for further talks with U.S. Secretary of State James A. Baker and condemned threats against Palestinians who met him in the next visit.

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A delicate balance in Egypt

NOWHERE in the world is the delicate balance between population growth and environmental stability under more pressure than in Egypt. With nearly 100 per cent of that country's people living and working on but 3 per cent of its land, and with a population increase of some one million persons every eight months, there remains little doubt which way the scales are tipping. Louis Werner, writing in People magazine, provides the first of two reports from the Nile delta.

BECAUSE the River Nile plays such a predominant role in all facets of Egyptian life, environmental problems there are compounded in both complexity and severity the farther one travels downstream. Indeed, as soon as the Nile passes the city of Cairo, whose 12 million residents use the river to carry off whatever cannot be recycled, the broader environmental implications of river pollution become unmistakable.

It is not an overstatement to say that whatever a Cairo delta farmer flushes away today, a Nile delta farmer

ments before we must turn it over to farmers. We often don't even have time for proper feasibility studies."

Another unwanted push onto new lands comes from Egypt's inheritance laws. As land in the delta is subdivided equally among all sons after the father's death, plots become so small that farming there becomes an uneconomic activity, unable to benefit from mechanisation, economies of scale, or farm credit. While the laws officially forbid farm fragmentation under 5 feddans (1 feddan = roughly one acre), in practice the average size of a family holding becomes ever smaller, and now might stand at half a feddan.

With old land prices in the delta reaching nearly £20,000 (\$6,900) per feddan, few small farmers can reconsolidate their holdings. The only alternative is to turn to land reclamation areas, where land can be purchased from the government for only £500 (\$170) per feddan. Although these plots have inferior soils and lack necessary infrastructure, they do at least offer the hope for future improvements.

The case of an irrigation project serving a nearby land reclamation area in the delta's Sharqiyah Governorate, some two hours by car north of the city of Zagazig, reveals just how misplaced this hope in the future may be. Dr. Essa is the man in charge of the project, which aims to increase the delivery of clean water to 17,500 reclaimed feddans that abut the Salihiya Desert, between the Nile and the Suez Canal.

Presently this new land scheme is irrigated by one of Egypt's foulest and most fecal wastewater canals, the notorious Bahr Al Baqr, which ignominiously serves the dual role of Cairo's household sewer and the northern industrial belt's effluent drain. The long-term clean-up plan, whose completion date is still years away, calls for the Ministry of Housing to upgrade Cairo's sewerage system and the Ministry of Industry to build treatment facilities for factory run-off.

In the meantime, Dr. Essa is saddled with the unenviable job of putting the Bahr Al Baqr to productive downstream use in the reclamation area. To do this, his irrigation engineers must mix its polluted drainwater with fresh water arriving from the tail of the Sidiyya Canal's nearby Bateek branch. The resulting brew, still quite black and odorous, is then used as the area's sole source of

water for irrigation.

The health consequences of irrigating from the Bahr Al Baqr, or eating food grown in the area, are unknown. Rumours of heavy metals in the water are shared by agricultural engineers, but the public health authorities responsible have never collected samples to determine if in fact it poses a risk.

The common wisdom about the water's safety meanwhile comes in the form of black humour. "The Bahr Al Baqr," one farmer said, "is too dirty for the billion-dollar snail to survive, so at least we don't have to fear that." Unfortunately, such small consolation is not a sufficient answer to the environmental questions now being pressed upon Egypt's land reclamation policies.



The polluted drainwater of Bahr Al Baqr canal joins the Sidiyya canal (photo by Walter Arnest)

Kouchner says Garang in control

(Continued from Page 1)

victims was injured critically.

The man lay near death at the regional capital Wau as the United Nations sought for hours to obtain rebel and government permission to fly the victims to Khartoum for treatment, said Trevor Page, the capital's top U.N. official.

Relief flights

A land-mine explosion destroyed a Red Cross relief plane and injured its five crew members as they took off Monday from a government-controlled airstrip in war-torn southern Sudan, a relief official said.

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Financial Markets **JORDAN TIMES**
In co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

| Currency | New York Close | Tokyo Close |
|------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Date 30/8/1991 | | Date 2/9/1991 |
| Sterling Pound | 1.6809 | 1.6877 |
| Deutsche Mark | 1.7470 | 1.7461 |
| Swiss Franc | 1.5265 | 1.5268 |
| French Franc | 5.9325 | 5.9315 |
| Japanese Yen | 136.83 | 136.84 |
| European Currency Unit | 1.7755 | 1.7761 |

USD per STG
Euro opening @ 1000 hrs. GMT

| Currency | 1 MTHS | 3 MTHS | 6 MTHS | 12 MTHS |
|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| U.S. Dollar | 5.62 | 5.62 | 5.75 | 6.00 |
| Sterling Pound | 10.81 | 10.68 | 10.56 | 10.56 |
| Deutsche Mark | 9.00 | 9.05 | 9.25 | 9.31 |
| Swiss Franc | 8.04 | 7.87 | 7.81 | 7.75 |
| French Franc | 9.00 | 9.51 | 9.37 | 9.50 |
| Japanese Yen | 7.53 | 7.15 | 6.87 | 6.75 |
| European Currency Unit | 9.68 | 9.71 | 9.81 | 9.81 |

Interest rate for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

| Metal | USD/Oz | JD/Gm ² | Metal | USD/Oz | JD/Gm ² |
|-------|--------|--------------------|--------|--------|--------------------|
| Gold | 347.25 | 6.80 | Silver | 3.62 | .090 |

* 21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|--------|--------|
| U.S. Dollar | .890 | .892 |
| Sterling Pound | 1.1582 | 1.1640 |
| Deutsche Mark | .3943 | .3963 |
| Swiss Franc | .4508 | .4531 |
| French Franc | .1161 | .1167 |
| Japanese Yen | .5037 | .5082 |
| Dutch Guilder | .3501 | .3519 |
| Swedish Krona | .1082 | .1092 |
| Italian Lira | .0529 | .0532 |
| Belgian Franc | .01916 | .01926 |

* Per 100

Other Currencies

| Currency | Bid | Offer |
|----------------|--------|--------|
| Bahraini Dinar | 1.7850 | 1.7900 |
| Lebanese Lira | .0770 | .0780 |
| Saudi Riyal | .1835 | .1842 |
| Kuwaiti Dinar | — | — |
| Qatari Riyal | 1.662 | 1.680 |
| Egyptian Pound | .2100 | .2300 |
| Oman Riyal | 1.7450 | 1.7600 |
| UAE Dirham | .7865 | .7880 |
| Greek Drachma | .3400 | .3500 |
| Cypriot Pound | 1.4300 | 1.4400 |

* Per 100

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Markets

| Index | 31/8/1991 Close | 1/9/1991 Close |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| All-Share | 106.19 | 106.84 |
| Banking Sector | 98.93 | 99.93 |
| Insurance Sector | 116.59 | 117.35 |
| Industry Sector | 113.39 | 113.64 |
| Services Sector | 130.02 | 129.71 |

December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Monday.

| | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|
| One Sterling | 1.6850/60 | U.S. dollar | Canadian dollar |
| One U.S. dollar | 1.1410/15 | Deutsche marks | Dutch guilders |
| | 1.7440/50 | Swiss francs | Belgian francs |
| | 1.9655/65 | French francs | Italian lire |
| | 1.5285/95 | Japanese yen | Swedish crowns |
| | 35.87/92 | Norwegian crowns | Danish crowns |
| | 5.9230/80 | U.S. dollars | |
| 1302/1303 | | | |
| 136.75/85 | | | |
| 6.3340/90 | | | |
| 6.8225/75 | | | |
| 6.7375/7425 | | | |
| One ounce of gold | 347.60/348.10 | | |

Cinema Tel: 67420

CONCORD SQUEEZE

Show: 5:00, 6:45, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

BODY ROCK

Show: 3:30 p.m.

Cinema Tel: 675571

NIJOUN

To Be Opened Soon
Nabil Mashini
Theatre

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 p.m.

Thatcher says 'China will become an economic power to astonish the world'

TOKYO (R) — Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said Monday that China would become an economic power to astonish the world and that the economic success would bring democracy.

She told a business audience of more than 2,000 that Japan, as the major political democracy in Asia, had a key role to play to help China in this transition.

"As can be seen across the Pacific from Hong Kong to San Francisco, the Chinese are very enterprising, who with good government will display their talents and industry," she said.

Despite the June 1989 Beijing military crackdown on student-led protest, Mrs. Thatcher said, China had vigorously continued economic reforms, giving people incentives and decision-making that enabled them to raise living standards.

"China will become an economic power to astonish the world. Political democracy will follow," she said.

Mrs. Thatcher described communism as "a very bad creed to start with. This century has seen the rise and collapse of this totally materialistic creed. It was made for those at the centre, not the people. Democracy makes rulers subject to the ballot box."

Mrs. Thatcher called on Japan to take a leading role in bringing stalled GATT world trade talks to a conclusion.

"Amid praise for Japan's achievements, however, the champion of popular capitalism

gently chided her hosts for recent stock scandals in which ordinary investors lost out.

"I would like to see Japan as a champion of genuine free trade," she said. "There is not much time. It is time to be firm and get decisions."

The latest round of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) was to have been completed at the end of 1990 but talks stalled over differences about farm trade between the United States, the 12-nation European community and Japan.

Mrs. Thatcher said trade in manufactured goods had boomed since World War II because it had been conducted under GATT rules, while protectionism and abuse had marked the agricultural, services and intellectual property sectors not governed by GATT.

"I would like to see a North Atlantic free trade area, with the United States, Canada, Mexico and the countries of the European Community and east Europe. The wealthy nations have an obligation to open their markets to poorer nations," she said.

She proposed two other areas where Japan should play a more active role.

One was to help authoritarian and totalitarian countries learn democracy and free enterprise.

The other was to ensure the soundness of the world financial system, with fair competition, eliminating cartels and honest and fair financial institutions.

The Japanese public was shocked in June and July when it learned that the nation's biggest trade partner, after the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The United States doubled its quota for Turkish textile exports in recognition of Ankara's support in the Gulf crisis.

But Ayhan Copur, chairman of the Turkish Foreign Trade Association, said only a fifth of the quota had been filled this year.

Textiles account for a quarter of total exports.

"We must develop an image of Turkish goods in textiles. Otherwise, we can't compete in U.S. markets with Europeans who produce fashionable goods," Mr. Copur told Reuters.

October. This will be raised to 50 per cent in 1992.

Inflation and growing budget deficits have eroded the popularity of the ruling centre-right Motherland Party, which is keen to produce brighter economic news ahead of the election.

Turkey's exports grew 11.5 per cent in 1990 after a slight fall in 1989, when the ending of tax rebates and a central bank policy to keep lira depreciation below the inflation rate helped to end eight years of growth.

The foreign trade deficit fell 12.3 per cent to \$3.37 billion in the first half of this year. The deficit stood at \$9.3 billion at end-1990, up 124 per cent on end-1989.

Nearly 100 trading firms have shut since 1989 with a loss of 5,000 jobs due to stagnation aggravated by the Gulf crisis.

Turkey halted trade with neighbouring Iraq, once its third biggest trade partner, after the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

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Fighting dies down after Yugoslavia accepts peace plan

BELGRADE (R) — Fighting died down in the rebel Republic of Croatia Monday after Yugoslavia's warring factions signed a European Community (EC) brokered peace plan.

Sporadic mortar attacks in various parts of Croatia were reported overnight but the major flashpoints appeared calm. Zagreb Radio said a policeman was killed in the eastern Croatian village of Laskovo and houses were set on fire in Gospic near the Adriatic coast.

But there was widespread relief that a ceasefire had been agreed following the death of almost 400 people in ethnic violence in the past two months.

"A great morning has dawned on Croatia, there is belief in the beginning of the end of all the evils," the Croatian News Agency (HINA) proclaimed.

Major arrives in Peking

PEKING (R) — British Prime Minister John Major began a three-day visit to China Monday saying it was time to end a period of international isolation imposed on Peking since the crushing of pro-democracy demonstrations two years ago.

"China has had a period of isolation. It needs people going in and telling them face-to-face what the rest of the world thinks," Mr. Major told reporters as he flew into Peking airport.

Mr. Major came from Moscow where, as representative of the Group of Seven industrialised countries, he met leaders of the reformist movement to discuss political structures emerging after the collapse of Communist rule. British government officials said he would brief Chinese leaders, including Prime Minister Li Peng, Communist Party General Secretary Jiang Zemin and President Yang Shangkun, on the Soviet situation. The officials said they feared China would react to Soviet developments by tightening political controls.

Centrepiece of Mr. Major's visit is the signing of an agreement Tuesday on construction of a large new airport in the British colony of Hong Kong, which returns to Chinese rule in 1997. The \$16.3 billion U.S. project

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman was more cautious. "The end is still far away," he said.

"The fact that representatives of Serbia ... accepted the (EC) declaration and documents on a ceasefire is in itself a great thing and a victory for our just policy. But it remains to be seen what will happen in reality."

Yugoslavia's six republics early Monday accepted and signed a plan — presented by Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van Den Broek, chairman of the EC Council of Ministers — for peace talks and a ceasefire in Croatia monitored by international observers.

The ceasefire agreement calls for an immediate disengagement by all sides involved in the fighting, the disbanding of all irregular paramilitary forces and the withdrawal of the federal army to barracks.

The army has been increasingly involved in the violence, fighting alongside Serbian guerrillas opposed to Croatian independence.

The republic, whose declaration of independence on June 25 sparked off the fighting, has a 600,000-strong Serb minority among its population of 4.5 million.

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, who blocked earlier EC peace initiatives, told Mr. Van Den Broek after the signing that Serbs and Croats must participate equally in monitoring the ceasefire.

The victim of aggression must be protected and Serbs are the victims," Yngoslav News Agency (Tanjung) quoted Mr. Milosevic as telling Mr. Van Den Broek.

He said he hoped extra observers would arrive within a week. They would be deployed as soon as possible, "but it won't be today or tomorrow."

Collective farm leader Vasilij Starodubtsev was to be charged later in the day, the spokeswoman said.

Dozens of other leaders in the Communist Party and state hierarchy have been sacked or are under detention pending formal charges.

Major arrives in Peking

John Major

was the subject of sharp exchanges between London and Peking before the two sides reached a breakthrough understanding on its construction in July.

Mr. Major, who has barely disguised his personal reluctance to be the first Western leader into Peking since the 1989 crackdown, made clear the visit was vital for Hong Kong's long-term interests.

"The vast majority of people in Hong Kong are pleased I am going because they recognise the importance of the airport agreement and what would happen to Hong Kong if I did not sign it.

"I have to live in the real world. It would not be proper for one to sit back and strike attitudes and let Hong Kong pay the price," he said.

Mr. Major's world swing from fishing with Mr. George Bush in Kemerbunkport to his warm encounter with Soviet leaders in Moscow yesterday has served to build his stature in domestic

and foreign markets.

Mr. Major, who has succeeded Margaret Thatcher as prime minister last November, need not seek a new mandate before next July.

The latest Mori poll gave Mr. Major's party a two-point lead over Labour. It had

trailed by an average of seven points in 13 of 14 other recent samples carried out by various pollsters, although the gap had been narrowing.

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